

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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SUBJ: REQUEST FOR MESSAGES FROM CHIEF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL

1. SWEEPING CHANGES IN SRI LANKA'S JUDICIAL STRUCTURE AND LEGAL PROCEDURES WERE INITIATED JAN 1 WHEN NEW ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE LAW CAME INTO EFFECT. CEREMONIAL INAUGURATION OF NEW COURTS WILL TAKE PLACE JAN 24. SECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS

SENT LETTER TO AMB ASKING THAT USG BE INFORMED OF FOREGOING AND STATING THAT MINISTER OF JUSTICE WOULD "VALUE HIGHLY ANY EXPRESSION OF GOOD WILL THAT MAY BE MADE ON THIS OCCASION TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OR TO HIMSELF, BY THE APPROPRIATE PERSONALITIES CHARGED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN YOUR COUNTRY". LETTER GOES ON TO CONVEY JUSTICE MINISTERS EXPRESSION OF VALUE HE PLACES ON "FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES" AND OF HOPE THAT "FRIENDLY CONTACTS COULD ALSO BE DEVELOPED" BETWEEN CHIEF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL OF SRI LANKA AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS ABROAD.

2. NEW LAW IS DESIGNED TO SIMPLIFY LEGAL SYSTEM, TO MAKE ITS PROCEDURES UNIFORM, TO INCREASE FAIRNESS IN ADMINISTRATION OF LAW, AND TO ELIMINATE UNJUSTIFIABLE
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EXPENSE AND DELAY. RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK OF

LAW ARE RESULT OF SEVERAL YEARS WORK BY AMERICAN CONSULTANTS FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL LEGAL CENTER OF NEW YORK. NEW LEGISLATION WAS PASSED BY NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY UNANIMOUSLY AND WAS SUPPORTED BY OPPOSITION AS WELL AS GOVERNMENT.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES MESSAGE FROM CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER TO NEW CEYLONSE CHIEF JUSTICE VICTOR TUNEKON AND ONE FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL SAXBE TO MINISTER OF JUSTICE FELIX DIAS BANDARANAIKE FOR CEREMONIAL OPENING OF NEW SYSTEM OF COURTS WOULD BE VERY MUCH IN US INTEREST. SUGGESTED TEXTS FOR MESSAGES FOLLOW:

4. FOR MESSAGE TO CHIEF JUSTICE TENNEKONB IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO EXTEND TO YOU MY CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR APPOINTMENT TO YOUR NEW HIGH RESPONSIBILITY AND TO SEND MY WARM GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES ON THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW COURTS SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA. THE RULE OF LAW AND THE DESIRE TO DISPENSE JUSTICE FAIRLY IS A TRADITION BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SHARE. I WISH YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES SUCCESS IN YOUR FUTURE EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THIS NOBLE TRADITION.

5. FOR MESSAGE TO JUSTICE MINISTER BANDARANAIKE: I WISH TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW JUDICIAL AND LEGAL REFORM SYSTEM FOR SRI LANKA. THE IMMENSE EFFORT REQUIRED TO COMPLETE AND IMPLEMENT SUCH A DIFFICULT TASK IS A GREAT TRIBUTE TO THE SKILL AND DEDICATION OF YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES. THE ATTEMPT TO MAKE JUSTICE EASILY AVAILABLE TO EACH AND EVERY CITIZEN OF SRI LANKA IS TRULY A NOBLE ONE. I HOPE YOUR EFFORTS WILL BE CROWNED WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

6. AIRGRAM ON NEW ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE LAW IS UNDER PREPARATION. IF DECISION IS MADE TO PROVIDE MESSAGES, REQUEST DEPT TRY TO ENSURE THEY ARE RECEIVED HERE BY COB JAN 18 SO THAT MAXIMUM IMPACT CAN BE OBTAINED.
VAN HOLLEN

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